

GAINESVILLE-HALL METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION
REGIONAL FREIGHT STUDY
Goals and Objectives

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1. INTRODUCTION

A key component of the Gainesville-Hall Regional Freight Study is the establishment of goals and objectives that create the Study’s strategic framework. A goal is a broad statement that defines a desired end state when the plan is implemented. An objective is a specific, measurable statement that supports the achievement of a goal. Goals and objectives provide a foundation for the development of performance measures and establish the strategic direction that will drive investment decisions over the life of the Gainesville-Hall Regional Freight Study.

This memorandum provides a review and synthesis of existing federal and state-level freight transportation goals. As shown in Figure 1, this information will be used to inform the development of the Gainesville-Hall Regional Freight Study goals and objectives.

Figure 1-1: Goals and Objectives Development Process



2. NATIONAL FREIGHT GOALS

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) was signed by President Obama in July 2012. MAP-21 did not significantly change the existing MPO planning goals or the process of administering federal planning funds to MPOs. However, MAP-21 did include provisions to improve national, state, and regional freight policy and planning and to improve the condition and performance of the national freight network. The majority of the MAP-21 freight provisions impact federal and state transportation agencies. The most significant freight related change for MPOs is the new requirement to establish, monitor, and set targets for freight performance in coordination with its state DOT. As part of MAP-21, signed into law in 2012, Congress established the following National Freight Transportation Goals. As part of MAP-21 requirements, state freight plans must demonstrate how they adhere to each of the following six National Freight Transportation Goals:

1. Improve the contribution of the freight transportation system to economic efficiency, productivity, and competitiveness
2. Reduce congestion on the freight transportation system
3. Improve the safety, security, and resilience of the freight transportation system
4. Improve the state of good repair of the freight transportation system
5. Use advanced technology, performance management, innovation, competition, and accountability in operating and maintaining the freight transportation system
6. Reduce adverse environmental and community impacts of the freight transportation system

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act was signed by President Obama in December 2015 and provides long-term funding for surface transportation planning and investment. The FAST Act establishes a national policy of maintaining and improving the condition and performance of the National Multimodal Freight Network to ensure that the Network provides a foundation for the U.S. to compete in the global economy. The FAST Act specifies goals associated with this national policy related to the condition, safety, security, efficiency, productivity, resiliency, and reliability of the Network, and to reduce the adverse environmental impacts of freight movement on the Network. The FAST Act continues the requirements developed under MAP-21 to establish, monitor, and set targets for freight performance.

3. STATE TRANSPORTATION GOALS

The following transportation goals and related freight objectives for the 2040 Statewide Transportation Plan (SWTP) and 2015 Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan (SSTP) reflect desired, long-term outcomes for transportation investment in Georgia.

- Supporting Georgia’s economic growth and competitiveness
 - Improved access to jobs, encouraging growth in private sector employment, workforce
 - Reduction in traffic congestion
 - Improved efficiency, reliability of commutes in major metropolitan areas
 - Efficiency and reliability of freight, cargo, and goods movement
 - Border to border and interregional connectivity
 - Support for local connectivity to statewide transportation network
- Ensuring safety and security
- Maximizing the value of Georgia’s assets
- Optimized throughput of people and goods through network assets throughout the day
- Minimizing impact on the environment

The goals are consistent with the national transportation goals established in MAP-21. The goals also support Governor Deal’s vision for a lean and responsive state government that allows communities, individuals, and businesses to prosper, including the Governor’s goals to:

- Reduce injury and loss of life on Georgia’s roads
- Improve the movement of people and goods across and within the State
- Leverage public-private partnerships and improve intergovernmental cooperation for successful infrastructure development
- Expand Georgia’s role as a major logistics hub for global commerce

4. GAINESVILLE-HALL RTP GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In 2015, the Gainesville-Hall MPO updated its Regional Transportation Plan. During the planning process, the following six goals and objectives (freight related only listed) were developed:

- Develop a financially feasible plan that will increase the likelihood of successful implementation through agency, stakeholder, and public coordination
 - Develop a plan that includes public participation from business owners, Chamber of Commerce, and other business groups
 - Preserve the existing roadway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian system assets by identifying adequate funding in the financial element of the plan
 - Engage local residents in the decision-making process of the plan
 - Engage Federal, State, Regional, and Local resource agencies in the decision-making process of the plan
 - Develop a plan that includes public participation from all groups, with special emphasis in reaching minorities, low income, persons with disabilities, and senior citizens
- Provide a more integrated multimodal and intermodal transportation system that includes increasing travel options by prioritizing transit, pedestrian, and bicycle travel throughout the region
 - Establish and utilize measurable criteria to evaluate how well the multimodal transportation system is operating and addressing identified needs
- Maintain and improve transportation system safety and security for motorists, transit riders, pedestrians, and bicyclists
 - Reduce the incidence of crashes on the system, particularly at high-crash locations
 - Review traffic crash data to systematically identify potential safety problems on roadway sections, bridges, and intersections with traffic and develop a list of projects necessary to eliminate deficiencies
- Take steps to continually monitor and maintain the transportation system
- Develop a transportation system that conserves energy, promotes the attainment of air quality standards, protects the natural environment, and minimizes adverse impacts
 - Develop a plan that reduces vehicle miles of travel (VMT), vehicle hours and greenhouse gas emission to improve air quality in the Atlanta nonattainment area
- Provide a transportation system that provides for the movement of people and goods safely and efficiently and advances the region's economic competitiveness
 - Develop a plan that will support existing businesses' and industries' transportation needs, economic development, and accessibility to jobs
 - Designate, prepare and maintain a map of the Truck Route System

- Consider freight and truck utilization and impacts on adjacent land uses
- Proposed transportation projects should consider incorporating features to enhance freight movement and provide adequate design to accommodate large freight vehicles
- Develop a transportation system that is efficient by integrating transportation land use decisions and other comprehensive planning tools
 - Promote orderly development in the region by coordinating transportation planning activities with local agencies responsible for land use management
 - Develop the roadway system to provide an acceptable balance between land use and travel mobility
 - Encourage jurisdictions to consider establishing appropriate guidelines for determining where property access may or may not be allowed along the roadway system (access management), and coordinate traffic signals along congested corridors using advanced technologies

5. STATE RAIL PLAN GOALS

In 2015, Georgia DOT updated the state's Rail Plan. Based on suggestions obtained through the outreach effort, GDOT developed the following vision statement for rail transportation.

"A safe and energy efficient state rail system that enables the economic wellbeing of Georgians by expanding access and enhancing mobility for people and goods in an environmentally sustainable manner."

Rail service goals aligned with the vision were developed based on the rail-related benefits, issues and obstacles that had been identified. These goals are as follows:

- **Enhance safety and security** – Typical initiatives could include minimizing grade crossing accidents, hazmat spills, theft from trains and rail facilities, and upgrading deficient rail infrastructure.
- **Provide for a reliable, enhanced and interconnected passenger rail system** – Typical initiatives could include improvements to on-time performance and reliability for existing services, ADA compliance at rail stations, and expansion of intercity and commuter passenger services.
- **Promote and expand intermodal connectivity** – Typical initiatives could include new or improved freight intermodal facilities and highway connectors and better linkages between intercity and urban mass transit passenger services with improved access for pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Develop an energy efficient and environmentally sustainable rail system** – Typical initiatives could include the retrofitting to lower emission diesel electric locomotives and implementing strategies and policies to encourage the diversion of passengers and freight highways to rail.
- **Preserve and improve the existing infrastructure** – Typical initiatives could include projects to accommodate the higher maximum loaded car weights on Georgia short lines (i.e., 286,000 pounds) and upgrading track and bridges to improve operating efficiency and main line capacity, and improved access to rail users through new sidings and additional car storage capacity.
- **Enhance economic development and competitiveness** – Typical initiatives could entail promoting new rail-served development to attract new rail-oriented industries and the implementation of industrial access funding aimed at lowering transportation costs for rail shippers.

6. ATLANTA REGIONAL FREIGHT PLAN

In 2015, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) updated the Atlanta Regional Freight Mobility Plan and it serve as the guiding planning document supporting the region's freight and goods movement strategies. The plan builds on previous planning efforts while evaluating recent changes and identifying potential future freight needs in the region. The following points are structured around the Atlanta Region's Plan goals, with freight objectives identified under each:

6.1 Competitive Economy

Regional Plan Goal: Building the region as a globally recognized hub of innovation and prosperity

Freight Objectives:

- Ensure a productive operating environment for freight transportation in the region
- Maintain and strengthen the connections and capabilities of the region as a global trade gateway
- Support and exploit staging hubs and intermodal transfer facilities for their contribution to the economic competitiveness of the region
 - With this fits the RP policy: maintain and improve the economic viability and accessibility of key intermodal freight facilities

Regional Plan Goal: Developing a highly educated and skilled workforce, able to meet the needs of 21st Century employers

Freight Objectives:

- Recognize and develop access to logistics employment as an entry step onto ladders of individual economic opportunity
- Support the introduction and proliferation of education and training in the transportation and logistics field, especially targeting high school and community college programs for job preparation

6.2 World Class Infrastructure

Regional Plan Goal: Ensuring a comprehensive transportation network, incorporating regional transit and 21st Century technology

Freight Objectives:

- Protect, manage, and invest in the regional truck route system
- Ensure competitive freight performance in six key dimensions: travel time, reliability, cost, safety, sustainability, and risk management
- Manage the critical role of first, last and transfer miles in the end-to-end performance of the region's supply chains
- Plan for the impact and promote the appropriate use of information, connected vehicle technologies, and driverless vehicle technologies to improve the productivity, safety, and visibility of freight movement
- Plan and preserve industrial land uses for job creation and efficient service to markets and population

Regional Plan Goal: Secured, long term water supply

Freight Objectives:

- Understand the intensity of water demand in industrial processes and incorporate in development planning

6.3 Healthy, Livable Communities

Regional Plan Goal: Developing additional walkable, vibrant centers that support people of all ages and abilities

Freight Objectives:

- Plan and design our community centers for the timely and fuel efficient supply of goods necessary for living and working
- Encourage the alignment of land use planning and the siting of freight producing and staging facilities for compatibility and safe, productive function
- Facilitate the redevelopment of outmoded industrial areas to attract modern facilities and accessible, sustainable jobs
- Know and protect the supply systems for food, fuel, medicine and other vital goods to provide system resiliency that withstands disruptions of transportation

Regional Planning Goal: Promoting health, arts, and other aspects of a high quality of life

Freight Objectives:

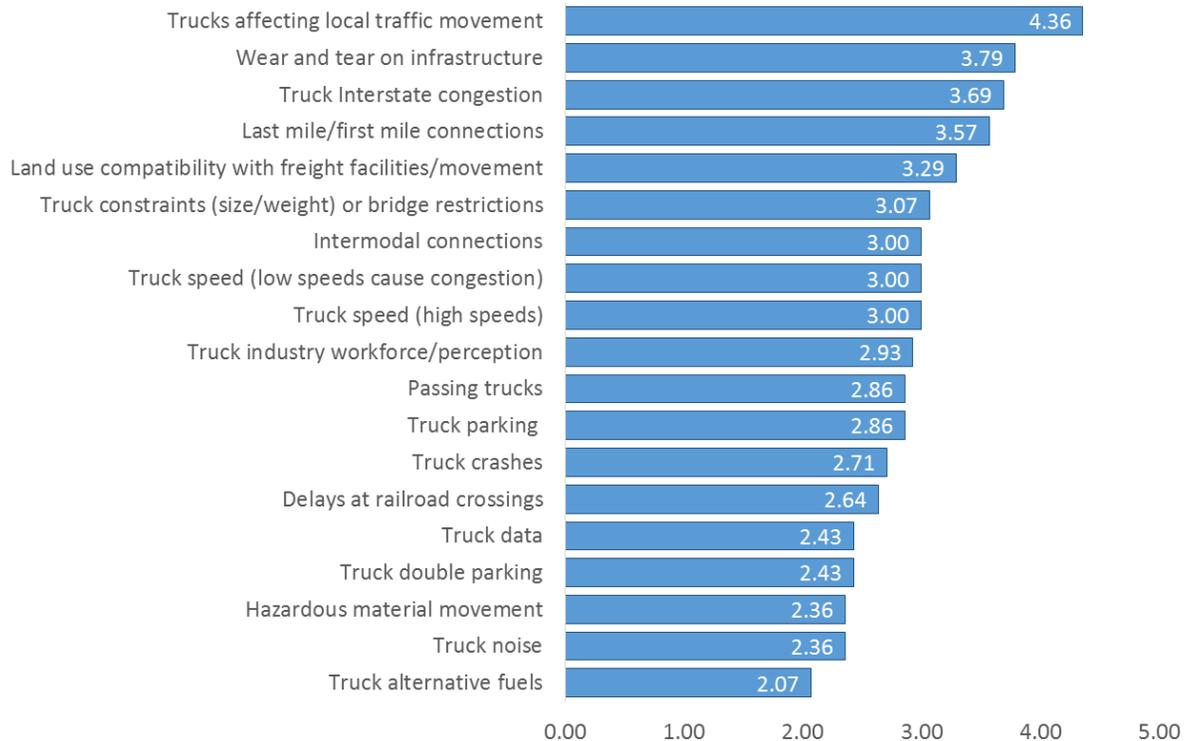
- Promote the adoption of efficient freight vehicles and technologies offering safer, environmentally cleaner performance
- Define and adopt commercially viable methods to deliver goods on a 24-hour clock
- Accommodate and inform freight logistics planning for events in public spaces, including unrelated activity affected by the event

7. QUESTIONS TO ASSIST IN DEVELOPING FREIGHT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Members of the FAC were asked four questions related to the freight movement in the region. The questions were developed in order to obtain information that provides a basis for the development of meaningful freight goals and objectives for the region. This section describes the questions and the results of the responses to these questions.

1. The first question asked respondents to rank a list of 20 freight issues on a scale of 1, being low, and 5, being high. Figure 7-1 illustrates the results of this question.

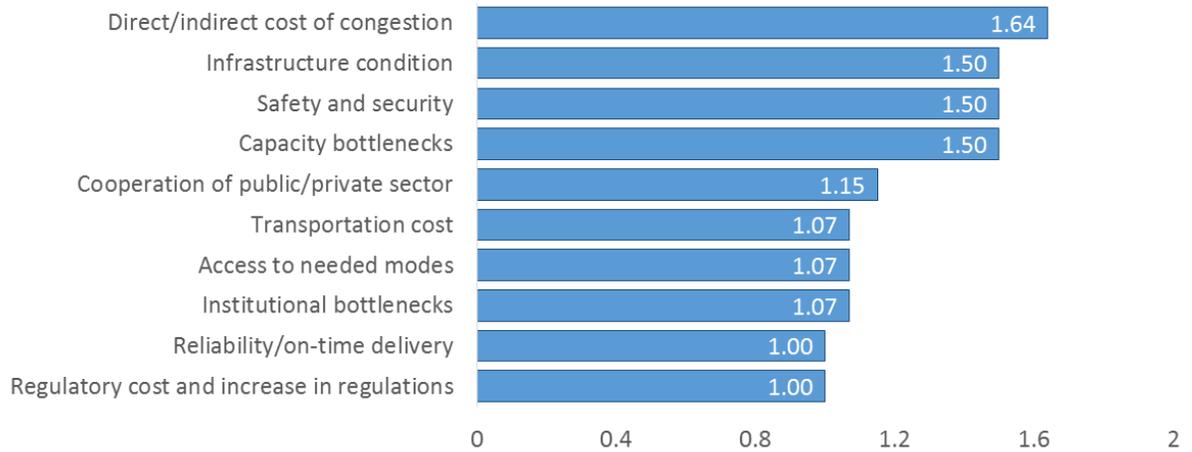
Figure 7-1: Freight Issues Ranked by Importance



Trucks affecting local traffic movement has the highest average ranking of 4.36. The wear and tear on infrastructure has the second highest average ranking of 3.79. Truck interstate congestion ranked third highest at a close 3.69. Last and first mile connections ranks fourth highest at 3.57.

- The second question asked participants to rate the importance of 10 factors on a scale from 1-3 (Neutral - Critical) for moving freight more efficiently and supporting the regional economy. **Error! Reference source not found.** illustrates the results of this question.

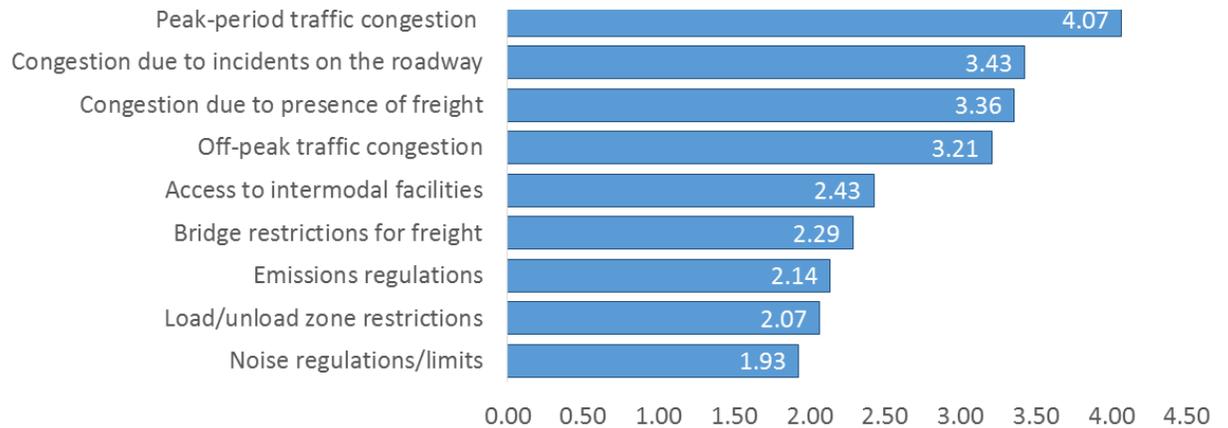
Figure 7-2: Factors for Moving Freight More Efficiently and Supporting the Regional Economy Ranked by Importance



The most important factor based on the average ranking is direct/indirect cost of congestion. The infrastructure condition, safety and security, and capacity bottlenecks also ranked relatively high in importance. It should be noted that no single issue was given the average ranking over 1.64.

- The third question asked respondents how often they've encountered a list of nine barriers to freight-related productivity with 1 being never and 5 being always. **Error! Reference source**

Figure 7-3: Barriers to Freight-Related Productivity

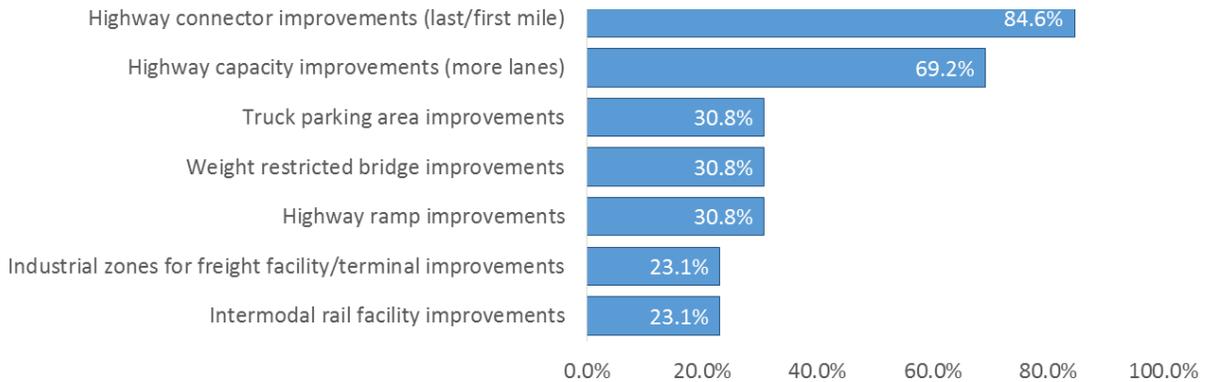


not found. illustrates the results of this question.

The top three ranked barriers, indicating those most encountered, are related to congestion and include: peak-period traffic congestion, congestion due to presence of freight, and congestion due to incidents on the roadway. The most frequently encountered barrier, according to the respondents is peak-period traffic congestion.

- The fourth question asked respondents to choose up to three (from a list of seven) improvements to the Will County transportation system that would benefit freight movement the most for the respondent's company or just in general. **Error! Reference source not found.** illustrates the results of this question.

Figure 7-4: Most Frequently Selected Improvements



The most frequently selected improvement at 84.6 percent is highway connector improvements (last/first mile). The next most frequent is highway capacity improvements (more lanes) but with a lower percentage at 69.2 percent followed by truck parking area improvements at 30.8 percent. Industrial zones for freight facility/terminal improvements and intermodal rail facility improvements are the least frequently selected at only 23.1 percent.

8. DRAFT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Regional Freight Study goals and objectives must be consistent with the GHMPO 2040 RTP, and align with federal and state goals and objectives. Based on the review, the following are the draft goals and objectives for the GHMPO Regional Freight Study:

- **Safety Goal** – Improve the safety, security, and resiliency on the Truck Route System
 - Mitigate safety issues that arise from freight movement through the use of context sensitive solutions
 - Provide alternative routes in case of emergencies and extreme weather events
 - Reduce the incidence of crashes on the system, particularly at high-crash locations
 - Identify opportunities to provide safe, convenient, and suitable areas to accommodate truck parking
 - Maintain pavements along high truck traffic corridors and intersections to eliminate rutting and cracking

- **Mobility Goal** – Reduce Congestion and bottlenecks on the Truck Route System
 - Designate, prepare and maintain a map of the Truck Route System (GHMPO RTP)
 - Proposed transportation projects should consider incorporating features to enhance freight movement and provide adequate design to accommodate large freight vehicles (GHMPO RTP)
 - Improve the existing system through investments designed to reduce congestion and freight bottlenecks.
 - Improve freight mobility and last/first mile connectivity between freight modes and major generators and gateways (ARC)
 - Provide efficient local connectivity to statewide transportation network (SWTP)
 - Plan for the impact and promote the appropriate use of information, connected vehicle technologies, and driverless vehicle technologies to improve the productivity, safety, and visibility of freight movement
 - Plan for the impact and promote the appropriate use of information, connected vehicle technologies, and driverless vehicle technologies to improve the productivity, safety, and visibility of freight movement

- **Community Goal** – Develop a transportation system that is efficient by integrating transportation land use decisions and other comprehensive planning tools or policies (GHMPO RTP)
 - Consider freight and truck utilization and impacts on adjacent land uses (GHMPO RTP)
 - Promote orderly development in the region by coordinating transportation planning activities with local agencies responsible for land use management
 - Review load/unload policies in downtown business districts and identify if improvements can be made to improve safety, accessibility, and travel times

- Reduce truck idling on the Truck Route System
- Improve air quality through investments designed to reduce congestion
- **Economic Competitiveness Goal** – Strengthen Regional Economic Competitiveness
 - Support existing and emerging businesses’ and industries’ transportation needs, economic development, and accessibility to jobs (GHMPO RTP)
 - Coordinate with regional jurisdictions to identify the top 10 first and last mile freight connections improvements
 - Promote and leverage regional rail access to retain and attract major industries
 - Coordinate with agencies who own critical freight bridges to ensure weight restrictions are not imposed or, if needed, improvements are made